



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

June 2022

5 June	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
12 June	Graeme Munro (<i>Communion</i>).....	9.30am
19 June	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
26 June	John Howell.....	9.30am
3 July	Shared Communion service, Wellesley College.....	10.00am

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Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am

Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 7.45am

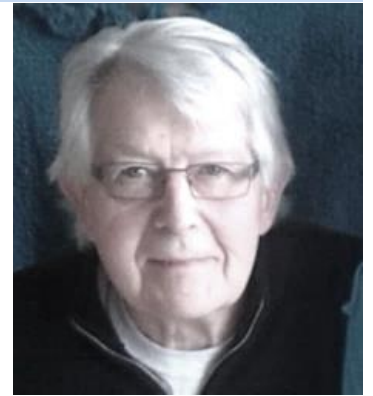
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am

For pastoral care needs, please contact our Pastoral Care Co-ordinators,

Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or Mary Williams 568 3216

How to serve communion...

Until COVID, our congregation gathered in a circle and received communion by 'intinction' - which is dipping your piece of bread into the common cup. But COVID changed all that and we have now reverted to serving small pieces of cut bread, with the grape juice in the traditional separate little glasses.



But how did that way of serving communion arise in the first place? The continuing Anglican tradition is still to use a common cup, as we shall see when we join St Alban's for a 'shared communion service' at Wellesley in a few weeks' time.

Wanting to confirm my understanding of why Presbyterians celebrated communion with grape juice in a small glass, the "Wooden Boat Forum" is the last place I would expect to find useful information - and yet I did...!

'Wooden boat forum'

Question:

• Haven't been to church in a while. Never to a Presbyterian church. A Christmas pageant featuring grandkids took me to one. What are these 3 shotgun-shell-size holes for?



Answers:

- The little cup holders are for communion but who knows about Presbyterians?*
- Blame the Methodists and their anti-alcohol teaching that led the very interesting preacher/dentist/physician Thomas Bramwell Welch, in 1869, to invent 'Dr Welch's Unfermented Wine.'*

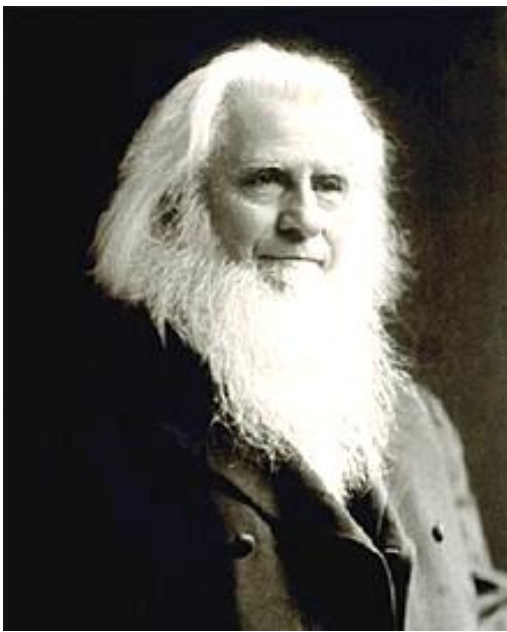
Even more interesting was a snippet from the Auckland Star in 1903. They ran a column of small items from around the world, where I found this... *'The Presbyterian church of Maryport is the first in England to cease the use of the common cup on sanitary grounds. The wine is now given in small glasses, one to each communicant.'*

What the Auckland Star doesn't tell us is that although a common cup of fermented wine was almost universal among churches up until the late 1800s, two social issues brought about the change: (1) the Temperance Movement and (2) Tuberculosis.

In the United States, the Temperance Movement had its beginnings largely due to the efforts of a Presbyterian minister, the Rev Lyman Beecher (1775-1863), who preached a series of sermons on 'the Nature, Occasions, Signs, Evils and

Remedy of Intemperance.' I found that Beecher was not alone in his campaign. 'Charles Finney and the *Women's Christian Temperance Union* joined him in the fight against alcohol.' They saw alcohol to be the source of much depravity, particularly among the poor and destitute. For the church, it raised the moral dilemma: 'How could they preach against the use of alcohol, yet serve wine in communion?'

The problem was they had no way at the time to store grape juice, as grapes begin to ferment as soon as the skin is broken. To provide grape juice for communion, churches would have to process the grapes, if they could find enough, in the days just before the service.



Into this situation, in 1869, came the aforementioned Dr Thomas Bramwell Welch (pictured), following the lead of Louis Pasteur, who had discovered pasteurisation just a few years before. Welch applied this process to grape juice to prevent fermentation and spoilage. It's use quickly spread among the protestant churches both in the United States and in the United Kingdom.

At the same time, there was growing concern over the possibility of spreading communicable diseases, particularly diphtheria and tuberculosis, through the common cup. Now, with the advent of COVID-19, the same issue has again been raised.

Although this was a separate issue from that of alcohol, the drive for the adoption of individual cups as a sanitary measure was given more weight with the change to grape juice, which lacked the supposed disinfecting qualities of alcohol. So, the practice continued for many years, even though there is nothing in our *Book of Order* nor in the *Directory of Worship* that requires this.

However, the attempt to form a uniting church in the 1970s made us much more aware of the practices in other denominations, and in many Cooperating Parishes, particularly between Anglicans and Presbyterians, a choice was provided by using trays of glasses which also carried a chalice of wine in the centre.

Many other congregations, including our own, decided to adopt intinction (dipping the bread in the cup) with either grape juice or wine, as a way of returning symbolically to the original practice of a common cup. Now health concerns have overtaken us once again.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Service attendance: Average attendance remains steady at about 21 for a 'Formal service' in the church, and at about 12 for an 'Informal service' in the Fellowship Room.

Fellowship lunch: We had our first 5th Sunday 'Fellowship Lunch' a couple of days ago. We had a warm and happy time together in the Fellowship Room sharing some good 'pot-luck' food and a magnificent cake baked by Elspeth and Emma. Rev Doug Rogers offered a thoughtful homily on fellowship. I was rather disappointed by the small attendance. But it may be just that several were unwell or away.



Metals collection: This is going slowly, so is manageable, maybe it will build slowly? I was hoping for some gold and platinum but mostly it's just steel...

Shared services: Our first shared service with St Alban's will be on 3 July. Remember, this is St Ronan's turn to share with the people of St Alban's at their place. **There will be no 3 July service at St Ronan's.** We will attend with the St Alban's people at Wellesley College (plenty of parking) at 10am.

This will be an Anglican communion service led by Rev Canon Peter Stuart, Rev Diane Gilliam Weeks will be preaching and one of our people will do the bible readings. Susan and our Sunday School children will share with the St Albans Sunday School and its teacher at Wellesley that day.

Reciprocal - the next shared service will be on 2 October at 'our place' at 'our time' 9:30am. So, a presbyterian style communion service, the sermon and bible readings will be delivered by St Alban's people and their Sunday School children and teacher will be joining with ours.

Please give priority to these shared services. I'm convinced it's the way ahead for each of our three Eastbourne churches.

Mainly Music: Mainly music did not meet at all during Term 1 (COVID) but restarted recently at the start of Term 2. Now going full swing...

Charity Receipts: All who donated to St Ronan's during FY 1/4/21 to 31/3/22 should by now have had their official charity receipt. If you have donated, but haven't had your receipt, drop me an email.

Next year, we will issue electronic receipts. These are acceptable to the IRD and will come to you faster and with less effort from Lauren (our accountant), Peter (our treasurer) and me...

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Sandy Lang

Just a little bit...

A (very) long time ago when I was a lad, I used to cycle to school along what was called the 'Main Road'. It had been there for several hundred years and had seen the transition from horse-drawn vehicles to modern cars and trucks.

Over time, most of the Main Road had been widened but there was one section, only a few kilometres long, that had shops fronting onto footpaths that could only be described as a 'chicane'. To steal just a little extra for the road, the footpaths had already been narrowed as much as possible. There was now simply no way to further widen the road.

Then the day came when a hotel had to be demolished to make way for a new development. The council decreed it should be set well back from the road, leaving a fairly wide parking area – just one property on a long, narrow road. I could see what they were trying to do but the result was merely a road that resembled a snake after a large meal. The rest of that stretch of road remained as constricted as ever.



A decade and a half later, I revisited the area and was surprised to see how many parking bays there were on both sides of the road. I had always known urban redevelopment was insidious but hadn't realised quite how frequently old commercial buildings were torn down and replaced.

I passed through the area again another decade and a half later, and the Main Road was now fully widened and free flowing.

I tell this story because in last month's Rood Screen I suggested:
Perhaps if we stopped underestimating the power of the Almighty.
Perhaps if we truly believed.
Perhaps if we asked God, and
Perhaps if we got off our tailfeathers and DID something, then
Perhaps we could make a difference in Ukraine...

After reading it, a friend said to me he didn't think anything he could do would make much (any) difference. And he was quite right. It is not the 'he' but the 'we' that can make the difference...

Setting back one building on the Main Road made no difference to the traffic flow. But collectively and over time...

If we all do our little bits, *together* we can do something about peace and the myriad of 'isms' that plague our society.

In the words of a beautiful traditional hymn from Zimbabwe:

*If you believe and I believe, and we together pray,
The Holy Spirit must come down and set God's people free,
And set God's people free, and set God's people free.
The Holy Spirit must come down and set God's people free...*

John Harris

Supporting Ukraine...

A big thank you to everyone who generously supported the fundraiser for the Ukrainian Red Cross by purchasing a Ukrainian flag sticker. Altogether, after some last-minute contributions, we raised \$853 through the sale of 55 stickers. This money has now been forwarded to the Ukrainian Red Cross Society via New Zealand Red Cross.



A special thank you goes to Brett Potter of Sticky Stickers for his support for the cause.

Ukraine's need for aid of all kinds is huge. It's important we continue to keep Ukrainians in our thoughts and prayers. Displaying a flag is a small way of keeping Ukraine's plight in the public eye.



Harry and Arianna with Anastasia (10) and Maryana

Across Europe, families have opened their homes to Ukrainian refugees. In Cambridge, my niece Arianna and her partner Harry are hosting Maryana and her daughter Anastasia from Kiev for a few months. Anastasia is enrolled in a local school and Maryana can keep working remotely for a bank in Kiev.

They are one of around 70 Ukrainian families now being hosted in Cambridge. The UK government contributes £350 per month to each host household.

Simon Shaw

Sunday Afternoon Chamber Concert...

A couple of weeks ago on 15 May at 4pm, St Ronan's was host to its first ever(?) chamber concert 'German Romantics'. It went down very well indeed...

Trio Muritai: We enjoyed about 75 minutes of Reinecke, Schumann and Mendelssohn. Chamber music written for various combinations of piano, cello and flute.



The programme was well chosen (by the trio). The performances were 'right up there' by the *ad hoc* group of eminent professional musicians, each with long national and international performance experience in top orchestras. And each with some Eastbourne connection... In the photo (by Warren Bolger) you can see Rosemary Barnes (piano), Roger Brown (cello) and Rebecca Steel (flute).

St Ronan-in-the-Fields: So, how did St Ronan's stack up as a chamber concert venue?

- Our discerning concertgoers (mainly but not all, Eastbournites) really enjoyed the ambience of our church space, the pew seating, and especially the stained-glass windows. And they said so...! Many would not have been in the church before.

- We also discovered the acoustics of our church were good for a chamber concert. That was a point about which I'd had some early uncertainty. Was the space acoustically live enough? Or was it too live? It was pronounced 'good' by both musicians and audience alike. That was excellent news as there's not a lot we could do had it proved inadequate acoustically...

- Layout and seating? Could the audience see the musicians OK? Yes, downstairs, but not well in the middle and back seats of the choir mezzanine. We blanked off those seats.

- Was the lighting adequate? Could the musicians see their scores, could the audience see the musicians? We did bring in some extra lighting (so the pianist could see her score) and some extra floodlighting for the stage. But the stage lighting was still a bit marginal. A concert is a performance - not a church service. The audience want to see the musicians' fingers and hands hard at work on fingerboard and key. We can and we will increase the stage lighting (at no cost to St Ronan's).

- Piano? Obviously, a piano is not portable like a cello or flute, so the pianist had to use our Yamaha piano rather than bring in her own instrument. The audience verdict is our piano stood up pretty well to some very demanding concert playing. But pianist Rosemary had to work very hard to get the sound she wanted from it - a Steinway Concert Grand would have been easier - they cost about as much as a small house...



Financials: This concert was never meant to be a church fund-raiser but a community service. So, the concert had to pay its way, and it did, but not produce a big surplus.

A total of 100 seats were available, and 100 seats were sold. A few seats went free to half a dozen intermediate-age children.

The ticket sales paid the musicians a fair rate. They also paid St

Ronan's a fair rate for the use of the church (covering power use and wear and tear, maintenance etc). There was some advertising to pay too so not much left over, but enough to underwrite the next concert so I don't have to bear the risk again...

It was good to see our church filled and appreciated by the community. Our church is a building the community sees as it drives past but hardly ever from the inside. It spends far too much of its time empty and unused...

Clearly, our chamber concert 'experiment' is one that will bear repeating. Watch this space...!

Sandy Lang

Children's Power Hour – Echoes of the Trinity

Recently in Power Hour, we have been following the footsteps of Jesus, from Palm Sunday and the Last Supper, through Easter, to his ascension and Pentecost. Throughout these events, what is striking is the number of times Jesus repeated himself to his disciples. We reflected on just how wonderful Jesus was through his teachings and actions. Indeed, Jesus was the Messiah.

Jesus was saying he would not always be with the disciples in person, but that he would return to the Father. However, he would return to be with them through the Holy Spirit on earth. In this repeated message Jesus kept echoing: 'Father, Son of the Father (Messiah) and Holy Spirit', i.e., the Holy Trinity.



Our craft table of Pentecost/Harvest Festival gave meaning to the Harvest of the Holy Spirit



Coming out of a Jerusalem house with the overwhelming Holy Spirit (red-gold sequins attached), Simon Peter and the disciples (back group) taught and baptised the Pentecostal holidaymakers (front group)

Like love being patient, the disciples had to wait until Pentecost for the Holy Spirit to come to them - a joyful holiday of celebrating the harvest. They realised how great Jesus was! He was the Messiah! Consequently, there was bursting out to share and teach others about the Good News of Jesus and the living God on Earth. The Holy Spirit had come!

The children took part in telling the various post-Easter events through table puppeting. By placing red and gold sequins onto the characters, they showed how the Holy Spirit first came to the disciples in a Jerusalem house, then went out to share the Good News and baptise lots of Pentecostal holiday makers. The children too had a red flame symbol pinned on their shirts.

Mills expressed our elated feelings about the Good News of Jesus, so well in his prayer:

*Jesus is my friend, you know,
He loves me.
His Spirit comes to help and guide,
He fills his friends up with God's
power,
He loves me.
Please make me brave and help
me love,
As you love me.
Amen.*

Susan Connell

Phil's photo – Time for an adventure...?

It was on a Saturday in (very) late autumn, and in the (very) late afternoon, that I set out on my bike. Bright sunshine, not too cold, a bit of a breeze. Time for an adventure...!

A strange time (you will say) to start a 20-km round trip to Pencarrow. But, from a photographic point of view, the attraction was quite simple. Sunrise and sunset are the two times each day when the lighting changes very fast. And photography is all about lighting...

Just past Burdan's Gate, I had my first surprise. The road was near impassable. Earlier in the week there'd been a heavy swell from the south - the aftermath of a severe Antarctic storm. Such a storm drives long and powerful waves against our south coast. In this case, scattering shingle and driftwood off the beach onto the already-liberally-potholed gravel road. Impossible to ride my bike through that lot. A narrow wheel soon founders in loose gravel. So, I pushed my bike the first few hundred metres till I came to a stretch, out of reach of the waves, and so still rideable.

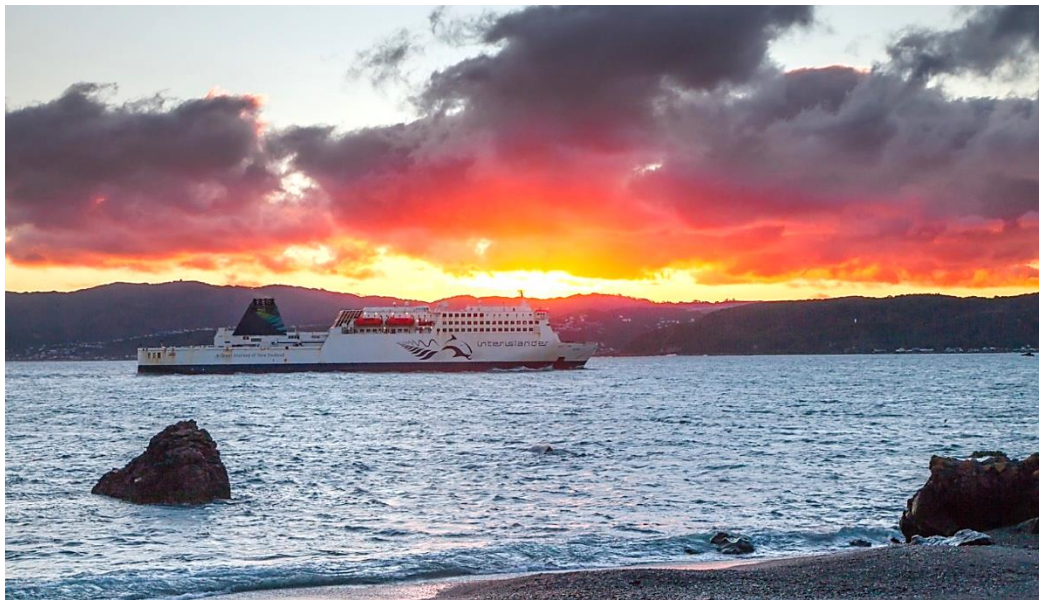
Further on, there were more stretches of road where I again had to walk and push. This was not going to be a quick trip...!

Eventually, I got my first sight of the lighthouse. A welcome from an old friend. I've been visiting it for decades...



The sun was now sinking rapidly (actually about one diameter every two minutes - it just seemed rapid because it was close to the horizon).

Looking east, Baring Head was lit up gold and pink in the setting sun. Fabulous. A view never to be tired of...



The Interislander entered the harbour just as the sun went down. A blaze of red as it set fire to the distant hills above Wellington.

The last of the light soon drained away, and the temperature plummeted.

It was then I had my second surprise of the trip. With no light on my bike, I suddenly realised biking 10 km back home in the dark might be a bit challenging...

I had an 'interesting' ride home in the near dark, trying to miss the potholes, to miss the driftwood and to miss the patches of shingle.

But I never felt alone. How could you feel alone in such a beautiful God-touched place...?



Eventually, I did reach home - to warmth, to light and to dinner. At the back door, Daisy Belle gave me such a jubilant welcome. Maybe her doggie sense had told her I'd been all alone and lost in the cold and the darkness? If so, how wrong she'd been...!

Phil Bengé



Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

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Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome
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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors
They do not necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church

**And the closing date for our next *Record* for July 2022
is Sunday 3 July 2022**